

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A housing adapted to receive a circuit board, the housing comprising:
 2. a housing body;
 3. first and second slots formed in the housing body, for guiding the circuit board into place and retaining the circuit board after the circuit board has been installed into a final position within the housing body; and
 4. a deflection/retention feature located between the first and second slots, the deflection/retention feature extending above a plane formed by the circuit board when the circuit board has been installed into the final position within the housing body, wherein the deflection/retention feature flexes the circuit board when ends of the circuit board are first inserted into the first and second slots and the circuit board is being slid into place, and retains the circuit board after the circuit board snaps into place and returns to a substantially flat state.
1. 2. The housing of claim 1 wherein one or both of the first and second slots include a lower surface that extends farther from a front of the housing body than an upper surface, thereby simplifying initial alignment of the circuit board into the slot.
1. 3. The housing of claim 1 and further comprising a curved guide proximate at least one of the first and second slots, for urging the circuit board toward one of the first or second slots after the circuit board has been inserted in the other of the first or second slots and while the circuit board is being flexed by the deflection/retention feature.
1. 4. The housing of claim 1 and further comprising a curved guide proximate the deflection/retention feature, for urging the circuit board toward the final position as the circuit board is slid into place.

1 5. The housing of claim 1 and further comprising one or more supports that help retain
2 the circuit board within the housing body after the circuit board has reached the final
3 position within the housing body.

1 6. A housing adapted to receive a circuit board, the housing comprising:
2 a housing body;
3 first and second slots formed in the housing body, for guiding the circuit board into
4 place and retaining the circuit board after the circuit board has been installed into
5 a final position within the housing body, with one or both of the first and second
6 slots including a lower surface that extends farther from a front of the housing
7 body than an upper surface, thereby simplifying initial alignment of the circuit
8 board into the slot;
9 a deflection/retention feature located between the first and second slots, the
10 deflection/retention feature extending above a plane formed by the circuit board
11 when the circuit board has been installed into the final position within the
12 housing body, wherein the deflection/retention feature flexes the circuit board
13 when ends of the circuit board are first inserted into the first and second slots and
14 the circuit board is being slid into place, and retains the circuit board after the
15 circuit board snaps into place and returns to a substantially flat state;
16 a first curved guide proximate at least one of the first and second slots, for urging the
17 circuit board toward one of the first or second slots after the circuit board has
18 been inserted in the other of the first or second slots and while the circuit board
19 is being flexed by the deflection/retention feature;
20 a second curved guide proximate the deflection/retention feature, for urging the
21 circuit board toward the final position as the circuit board is slid into place; and
22 one or more supports that help retain the circuit board within the housing body after
23 the circuit board has reached the final position within the housing body.

1 7. An assembly comprising:
2 a circuit board comprising;
3 a plurality of components mounted on the circuit board; and
4 a connector for electrically coupling the plurality of components to other circuits
5 when the assembly is attached to a system; and
6 a housing body comprising;
7 first and second slots formed in the housing body, for guiding the circuit board
8 into place and retaining the circuit board after the circuit board has been
9 installed into a final position within the housing body; and
10 a deflection/retention feature located between the first and second slots, the
11 deflection/retention feature extending above a plane formed by the circuit
12 board when the circuit board has been installed into the final position
13 within the housing body, wherein the deflection/retention feature flexes
14 the circuit board when ends of the circuit board are first inserted into the
15 first and second slots and the circuit board is being slid into place, and
16 retains the circuit board after the circuit board snaps into place and returns
17 to a substantially flat state.

1 8. The assembly of claim 7 wherein one or both of the first and second slots of the
2 housing body include a lower surface that extends farther from a front of the housing body
3 than an upper surface, thereby simplifying initial alignment of the circuit board into the slot.

1 9. The assembly of claim 7 wherein the housing body further comprises a curved guide
2 proximate at least one of the first and second slots, for urging the circuit board toward one
3 of the first or second slots after the circuit board has been inserted in the other of the first or
4 second slots and while the circuit board is being flexed by the deflection/retention feature.

- 1 10. The assembly of claim 7 wherein the housing body further comprises a curved guide
2 proximate the deflection/retention feature, for urging the circuit board toward the final
3 position as the circuit board is slid into place.
- 1 11. The assembly of claim 7 wherein the housing body further comprises one or more
2 supports that help retain the circuit board within the housing body after the circuit board has
3 reached the final position within the housing body.
- 1 12. The assembly of claim 7 wherein the connector of the circuit board is guided toward
2 a connector of opposite gender on the system using one or more alignment posts and one or
3 more corresponding holes, wherein the one or more alignment posts and the one or more
4 corresponding holes are distributed among the connector of the circuit board and the
5 connector of opposite gender on the system.
- 1 13. The assembly of claim 12 wherein the alignment posts are tapered.
- 1 14. An assembly comprising:
2 a circuit board comprising;
3 a plurality of components mounted on the circuit board; and
4 a connector for electrically coupling the plurality of components to other circuits
5 when the assembly is attached to a system, wherein the connector of the
6 circuit board is guided toward a connector of opposite gender on the
7 system using one or more tapered alignment posts and one or more
8 corresponding holes, wherein the one or more alignment posts and the
9 one or more corresponding holes are distributed among the connector of
10 the circuit board and the connector of opposite gender on the system; and
11 a housing body comprising;
12 first and second slots formed in the housing body, for guiding the circuit board
13 into place and retaining the circuit board after the circuit board has been

- 1 15. A method of assembling a circuit board into a housing to form an assembly
- 2 comprising:
 - 3 inserting a first end of the circuit board into a first slot of the housing;
 - 4 flexing the circuit board over a deflection/retention feature;
 - 5 inserting a second end of the circuit board into a second slot of the housing; and

6 pressing the circuit board into place until the circuit board clears the
7 deflection/retention feature and snaps into place, thereby returning a substantially
8 flat state.

1 16. The method of claim 15 wherein inserting a first end of the circuit board into a first
2 slot of the housing and inserting a second end of the circuit board into a second slot of the
3 housing each include simplifying initial alignment of the circuit board into the slot by first
4 contacting a lower surface of the slot that extends farther from a front of the housing than
5 an upper surface of the slot.

1 17. The method of claim 15 wherein inserting a second end of the circuit board into a
2 second slot of the housing includes engaging a curved guide proximate the second slot that
3 urges the circuit board toward the second slot.

1 18. The method of claim 15 wherein pressing the circuit board into place until the circuit
2 board clears the deflection/retention feature and snaps into place includes engaging a curved
3 guide proximate the deflection/retention feature that urges the circuit board toward a final
4 position.

1 19. The method of claim 15 wherein pressing the circuit board into place until the circuit
2 board clears the deflection/retention feature and snaps into place includes engaging one or
3 more supports of the housing that help retain the circuit board within the housing after the
4 circuit board has reached a final position within the housing.

1 20. The method of claim 15 and further comprising:
2 attaching the assembly to a system by:
3 guiding a connector of the circuit board toward a connector of opposite gender
4 on the system using one or more alignment posts and one or more
5 corresponding holes, wherein the one or more alignment posts and the

6 one or more corresponding holes are distributed among the connector of
7 the circuit board and the connector of opposite gender on the system; and
8 fastening the housing to the system.

1 21. The method of claim 20 wherein the alignment posts are tapered.

1 22. A method of assembling a circuit board into a housing to form an assembly, and
2 fastening the assembly to a system comprising:

3 inserting a first end of the circuit board into a first slot of the housing by first
4 contacting a lower surface of the first slot that extends farther from a front of the
5 housing than an upper surface of the first slot;

flexing the circuit board over a deflection/retention feature by engaging a first curved guide proximate a second slot that urges the circuit board toward the second slot;

8 inserting a second end of the circuit board into the second slot of the housing by first
9 contacting a lower surface of the second slot that extends farther from a front of
10 the housing than an upper surface of the second slot;

11 pressing the circuit board into place to engage a second curved guide proximate the
12 deflection/retention feature that urges the circuit board toward a final position
13 until the circuit board clears the deflection/retention feature and snaps into place

14 and engages one or more supports that help retain the circuit board within the
15 housing, with the circuit board returning to a substantially flat state; and
16 attaching the assembly to a system by:

17 guiding the circuit board toward a connector of opposite gender on the system
18 using one or more tapered alignment posts and one or more corresponding
19 holes, wherein the one or more alignment posts and the one or more
20 corresponding holes are distributed among the connector of the circuit
21 board and the connector of opposite gender on the system; and
22 fastening the housing to the system.